

Interim Supply

by the previous government that they, too, were prepared to undertake such a survey. This matter also affects my constituency as I think it affects most constituencies throughout Canada. I would like to bring to the attention of the government the fact that at Estevan at present the provincial authority is building a \$40 million power project, and I think it is only fair to ask that even though this project is already under development it should be made eligible for some assistance.

Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to take the time of the committee any longer. I do hope, however, that the government will take cognizance of some of the points I have made and bring them into full consideration this session.

Mr. Regier: I would not have risen at all to speak on this resolution had it not been for an article which appeared in today's copy of the *Gazette*. The question I raised on the orders of the day yesterday was a vital one and an urgent one. I asked the Minister of Labour what this government intended to do to head off a serious, developing unemployment problem, having in mind especially the situation on the west coast. The article in the *Gazette* is set in heavy black type, and if I am to take it that that newspaper is a supporter of the government or reflects the thinking of the government, then I am indeed alarmed. The opening paragraph says "labour minister Starr was ready in the Commons" when I asked him about the problem of unemployment. But I am a little concerned that this government is not ready to meet the situation in any shape or form. Among the people in my province I noticed before I left for Ottawa a deep concern in all walks of life about the situation that is likely to develop this coming winter. The minister indicated in his reply to me that the government did expect seasonal unemployment. I attempted to call his attention to the fact that this unemployment already existed; it exists right now. It was there in August and September, and a situation like that must be recognized by the government.

The minister indicated a proposed housing program which might provide some relief. I am not going to deny that the announcement in regard to housing was a welcome one. However, I believe I should point out that the decline in housing will not be offset even by that most welcome announcement. The amount of money allocated by the government in that announcement is not sufficient to offset the decline in housing which is severe as compared to the same time one year ago.

[Mr. McCullough.]

The recommendation made this morning by the new hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway—and I might say made so ably—should be given serious consideration by the government at a very early date indeed. It was promised to the people of Canada by Conservative candidates in the most recent election. My Conservative opponent, a most highly respected candidate for public office, gave us the assurance that the Conservative party would sponsor trade with red China if her party should form a government. The people on the west coast are looking to this new government to implement that promise.

We are urging this government to take action in finding additional markets for Canadian products in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth and thereby supply employment to Canadians. I personally was very discouraged when I found out that a member of the British government had to undertake to inform the Canadian people that they were willing to do business with us; yes, they were more than willing to do so. It was very apparent that the Minister of Finance did not want the Canadian people to know just how willing the people of the United Kingdom are to do business with us.

We have also urged that additional markets be found for Canadian products by the acceptance of foreign currency. I remember full well that the present Prime Minister of Canada at one time on a motion put forward by the Social Credit party in this house bolted his party and voted for the acceptance of foreign currency for Canadian products. I would like to know at this time whether those who are unemployed will have some reason to hope that this new government will find additional outlets for the products of Canadian labour. We need not necessarily go abroad to find markets for our products. A great many Canadian citizens are in want and an adequate welfare legislation program supplying all our people with at least a minimum of purchasing power will help create employment for Canadians.

In closing, I wish to point out that when we have unemployment everyone in Canada suffers, rich and poor alike. Perhaps the Canadian economy can tolerate a certain amount of unemployment but when it exceeds the danger point no government in office can handle the urgent problems created by that situation. If this government desires to avoid extremely serious difficulties both for the Canadian people and in terms of its own political future welfare I must say I hope the answer given to me yesterday by the Minister of Labour, especially as it was interpreted by the *Montreal Gazette*, is not an indication of the thinking of this government.